

2007 AmeriCorps Launch

The 2007 AmeriCorps Launch was one of the best ever. The two-day training event for 225 first- and second-year AmeriCorps members was held at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Frankfort. Members serve in 11 programs across the state.

During the Launch, members from all the AmeriCorps programs had the opportunity to socialize and learn tips, techniques and other valuable information to help them during their year of service. Workshops covered topics including Internet safety, community strengthening, disability awareness, personal safety, organizational skills, the drug problem in Kentucky, financial planning and disaster preparedness. The Launch also helped members understand the big picture of national service. One member said, “I didn’t realize how much of a difference AmeriCorps members make in Kentucky – it’s amazing.”



Trainers and presenters included Doris Settles, Chef Nancy Russman, Lanny Taulbee of the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service, Gary Perkins of Operation UNITE, Regina Horine of the Kentucky Department of Labor, Ben Marcus and the Rev. Damon Lynch III with The Leadership Practice, Judy Morris, Jennifer Watson and Jessica Amburgey of Kentucky Child Now, Rose Johnson of the American Red Cross and Carolyn Wheeler.



This year, the induction ceremony was different, held in the hotel ballroom instead of the state Capitol steps. Steve Buttleman, official bugler at Churchill Downs, issued the Call to the Post and the Frankfort Police Department Honor Guard presented the U.S. and Kentucky flags. Nedra Young, a Louisville Metro AmeriCorps Program member, led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by Buttleman playing the National Anthem. After a brief welcome by Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and

Service Chairwoman Wendy Stivers, Ph.D., Cabinet for Health and Family Services Department for Human Support Services Commissioner Marla Montell introduced special guest, Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson. Secretary Grayson administered the AmeriCorps pledge of service to members and program directors and the ceremony closed with a stirring rendition of My Old Kentucky Home by Buttleman and the retiring of the colors.

“As someone who is passionately driven by engagement in our counties, cities and neighborhoods, I am extremely proud of the vital contributions AmeriCorps members have made to our commonwealth and nation,” Grayson said. “Engaged citizens, such as AmeriCorps members, are more likely to vote and to engage in the legislative process, and I look forward to watching the impact that these latest AmeriCorps members make on our society.”

Eileen Cackowski, executive director of the KCCVS, said Kentucky AmeriCorps members continue to prove the value of community service in meeting even the most serious social, academic and preparedness challenges.



“Faced with challenges, they persevere and overcome, reaching out to their fellow Kentuckians with direct service, compassion and care,” Cackowski said. “AmeriCorps members help frail elderly people remain in their homes, learn and train others to respond in the event of emergencies, help at-risk students catch up and even surpass their academic peers and, perhaps most valuable of all, they offer an ear to listen and a strong desire to help that inspires and appeals to others seeking a way to serve.”